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**Creative Job  
Search Technique**

**Women Returning to Work**

**Appendix**

## **Appendix to Creative Job Search Techniques**

Commission of Employment and Immigration  
Editing and publication: INNOVACOM  
Graphic design: WAWA DESIGN  
Printed in Canada  
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## Women Returning to Work

### Introduction

**Women today make up about forty per cent of all workers in the labour market.**

It is estimated that in a few years this proportion will reach fifty per cent, that is, half of all workers in Canada.

This includes women who stopped working for a time and have now decided to return to work, for a variety of reasons:

- inflation is taking a bigger bite out of the family budget every day
- a mother finds she has more free time because the children have started school
- an opportunity arises for a woman to return to a job she held before
- to accept the challenge of beginning a new career after a number of years devoted to other activities
- jobs are now accessible to women that open new horizons, a wider variety of occupations are now accessible to women

### New doors are opening

Increasingly, new opportunities are beginning to open for women on the labour market. Jobs formerly closed to women are now within their reach. Women are now admitted into the previously staunchest male strongholds: the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and the Police Forces.

We also find women working as bus drivers, real estate agents, in automobile sales, and as technicians, machine tool operators, personnel officers, public relations officers, managers and so on. Women are also becoming more numerous in the professions, as barriers which formerly hindered or prevented their entry and subsequent advancement are being progressively removed. Times have changed and woman's role has expanded. It is every woman's right to decide in what direction she wishes to seek her personal, social and economic fulfillment.





## You are not alone

If you are looking for a job that will put you back in the labour market, remember you are neither the first nor the last woman to be in this position. Besides, employers have confidence in women who have spent a few years away from the labour market, generally because they often have:

- a better sense of organization
- a greater sense of responsibility
- a stronger motivation to work
- job stability

It is mainly for these people that the *Creative Job Search Techniques* in this booklet were designed. Many women who have made up their minds to return to the labour market after several years' absence do not know how to get back into the working world:

- they often lack self-confidence
- they do not know how to sell their qualifications
- they often feel inferior to other women who already have a permanent job

- they are afraid they will not measure up to new work demands
- they feel more restricted than women who are already in the labour market.

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## Something you can do

In order to make the most of the *Creative Job Search Techniques* sessions, you must do the same as everyone else who is looking for a job:

- analyse yourself
- make a survey of the labour market and an inventory of the employers in your community
- write your *résumé*
- prepare yourself for an interview with an employer

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## First step: get ready!

Once you have looked around and become aware of the possibilities available to you, start thinking about arrangements that will allow you to carry on your family or personal life without disruption once you have begun your new career.

You have probably already thought about day care for the youngest child, maybe updating your wardrobe, the cost of transportation and meals, and the investment you will have to make in terms of new clothing, equipment or simply time.

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## What type of work would you like to do?

It is now time to decide what kind of work you would like to do. Take this opportunity to strike the best compromise between your family obligations and your desire to go back to work. Ask yourself whether you want to work:

- at home
- outside the home
- in an office
- in a factory
- in a store
- for a small company or a large company
- in a small town or a large city
- during the day, in the evening or at night
- on shifts
- alone or in a team
- full time or part time
- on contract, on commission or for wages
- on a free-lance basis or self-employed
- with or without public contact

It is important to think about these questions. No one can decide for you and you will avoid problems if you answer them before circumstances force your hand.

## Getting to know yourself

It is also important to identify your talents, inclinations, aptitudes, tastes and experience. This is a useful personal assessment that will teach you more about yourself and will help you determine what kind of job would be best for you.

Here are a few questions and answers that could show the way to interesting and accessible jobs.

# 1

Can you exercise diplomacy and tact in relations with others?

Do you like having professional relationships with people?

Do you like varied work and frequent change?

Do you have initiative and energy?

Do you have an eye for detail?

If so, you might be interested in working in

advertising  
services

or as one of the following:

automobile salesperson  
sales clerk in a bookstore  
public relations officer  
travel agent  
real estate agent

# 2

Do you like activities in which technology and machines are more important than the human factor?

Do you like routine, concrete and structured work?

Do you like precision work according to established norms?

If so, the corner laundry may be looking for someone to do the dry cleaning.

# 3

Are you good at deciphering handwriting?

Are you energetic and methodical?

Can you work outdoors in any weather?

If so, your post office may be looking for letter carriers.

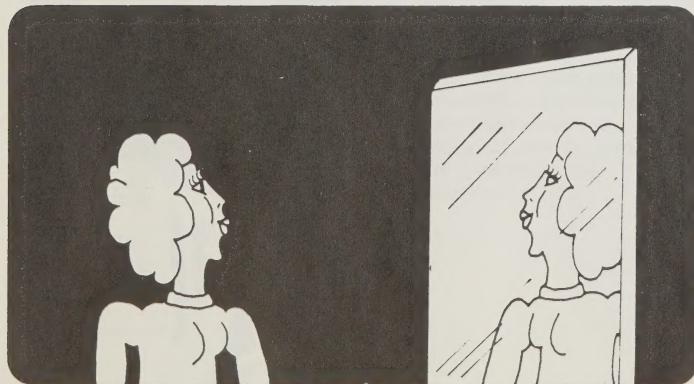
# 4

Are you concerned about your appearance?

Do you keep yourself very well groomed?

Do you know all about the various beauty products, household appliances and cleaning products on the market?

Many firms are looking for women such as you to advertise, demonstrate, publicize or sell their products, and they usually demand women who are well-groomed and attractive.



Obviously, you must be realistic. Some jobs require special training and should be given serious thought only if you possess the required qualifications unless, of course, you should decide to go back to school, which is always a possibility.

## Experience counts too

Many women who return to the labour market do not mention their experience because they are afraid that it is outdated and that their experience as a homemaker has no relevance to the labour market. They are wrong: experience does count. It may have been acquired in one of the following areas:

- paid work
- volunteer work
- courses you have taken and knowledge you have acquired
- your leisure activities.

## 1

### Paid work

- Have you ever been a census taker or an enumerator for school board, municipal, provincial or federal elections in your neighbourhood?
- Have you ever worked a few hours a week driving children, senior citizens or handicapped persons for a social service agency?
- Have you ever given lessons (sewing, interior decoration, painting, handicrafts, dancing, music, swimming or skiing) in your home, for the school board or elsewhere?
- Have you ever worked on an Opportunities for Youth or LIP (Local Initiatives Program) project in your area?

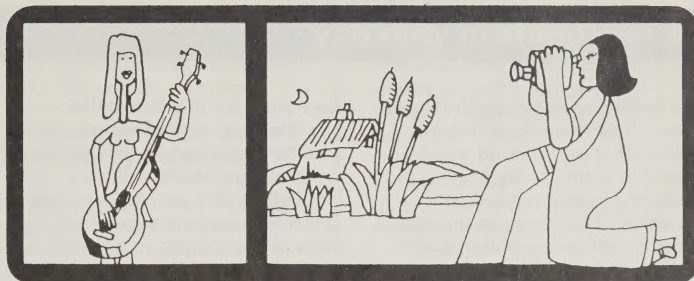




## 2

**Volunteer work**

- Have you devoted hours of your time to caring for, playing with or bringing up children?
- Have you taken part in charitable work or perhaps organized religious, educational or political groups, nurseries or other community activities (Boy Scouts, Girl Guides, 4H, summer camp or university women)?
- Have you ever been in charge of a group of persons within an organization?
- And what about your housework, your everyday chores: the care of children, washing, ironing, doing the dishes, preparing meals, the children's lessons and homework, painting, wallpapering, decorating the house? — all that is "volunteer" work, and it counts, too!



## 3

**Courses you have taken and knowledge you have acquired:**

- Have you taken second language courses?
- Have you taken courses in childhood education?
- Have you taken driving lessons?
- Have you taken other courses for general education or personal improvement?
- What equipment do you know how to operate? Typewriter, kitchen appliances, cash register, telephone switchboard, tape recorder, slide projector, movie camera, car, photocopying machine?

## 4

**Your leisure activities:**

- Have you ever served on the board of a sports league, recreational organization, or any other group or association?
- Have you ever held a position of responsibility with a recreational organization or a community centre?
- Did you ever help found a recreational association?

All this is experience and it counts when you are looking for a job.

Have you ever stopped to think about the number of different things you do in a few hours in the course of a single day?

These facts can have a positive impact on the employer who is trying to fill a position in his company.

## A few hours in your day

The following example illustrates a few of the many jobs that a homemaker performs in the course of a single day. By analysing these very ordinary household tasks we can quickly identify various essential qualifications and aptitudes that are

necessary for this occupation — qualities and aptitudes that can also be applied to an occupation on the labour market. With a little effort on your part, you can discover many other qualifications and aptitudes in a home-

maker's daily work that can be used in a job on the labour market.

Take the time to analyse yourself and the various jobs you do around the house. You will be surprised at what you can find.

### Jobs

- It is 7:00 A.M. You wake the children for school. You make the family's breakfast. You dress the children.
- After the children leave for school, you quickly do a small load of laundry while you make the beds and jot down your weekly shopping list. You prepare a light meal for the members of the family who will be coming home for lunch, and you go out to do some errands. You stop by the cleaner's, the drugstore and the corner hardware store. You get back just as the children are coming home for lunch.
- You serve lunch and grab a bite to eat between two more loads of laundry. You have to resew the button on Sylvie's overalls which was about to come off.
- After lunch, you do a little cleaning up in the kitchen, the living room and the bathroom before straightening out the bowling league's finances. A little later, you fold and iron a few shirts and then resume recovering your kitchen chairs which were in bad shape.
- It is now 4:00 P.M. and the children are home from school. You prepare supper and let the children go outside to play for an hour before doing their homework.

### Qualifications

Sense of responsibility  
Punctuality  
Judgment  
Knowledge of nutrition  
Sense of organization  
Planning  
Sense of administration  
Thinking ahead

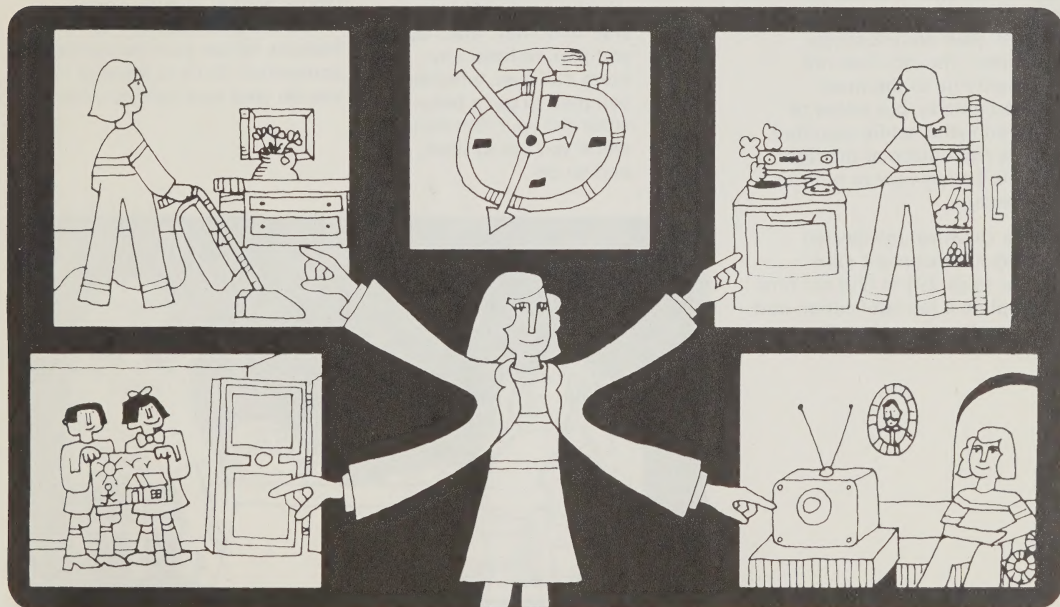
Purchasing, selecting  
Comparison shopping  
Scheduling  
Skill at coping with an emergency situation  
Concern for cleanliness and neatness  
Knowledge of accounting  
Skill at performing various kinds of manual work  
Thriftiness



- You put supper on. The children come in to do their homework and go over their lessons for the next day. You help them with their assignments, give them dictation, tell them where to get information, listen to them read — in short, you become the house tutor.
- You set the table. Your husband comes home from work. You tell him what happened during the day and discuss your plans for the weekend.
- The family sits down to supper. After supper, you relax for a few minutes before cleaning up and doing the dishes. A little later you put the children to bed and you pick up some sewing you had begun while you watch the news on television.

#### Planning

Ability to make decisions  
 Knowledge of nutrition  
 Ability to guide children  
 General knowledge  
 Patience  
 Judgment  
 Skill at dialogue  
 Skill at summarizing and reporting facts



Concern for cleanliness  
 Punctuality  
 Sense of responsibility  
 Concern for being well-informed  
 Now that you know what your possibilities are, you must learn to make the most of this potential. The best way is to write a *resume*.

## Your resume and the job application form

Your resume is a tool that will tell the employer about you, about your talents and about your experience, and help him to decide whether he needs a person with your qualifications. Remember: the job does not necessarily go to the most qualified person, but rather to the person who, while qualified, is in the right place at the right time and knows how to put this to advantage.

See the *Creative Job Search Techniques* document (3rd volume, page 29) to find out how to complete a job application and how to write your *resume*.

## The interview with the employer

You will be called for an interview and that is where the real test will come. You are not quite sure how to act? There are a few things you should be aware of, for example:

- There are still some employers who will try to find out some very personal information. They will ask you, for example, whether you are still living with your husband, whether you get along well with him, whether you plan to have any more children, whether you plan to get a baby-sitter for your children while you are at work, and so on.

- You are under no obligation to answer these personal questions. Your personal life is of no concern to anyone but yourself, and the employer must understand this. Politely and tactfully point out to him that these matters do not relate to the job.

To better prepare yourself for the interview, again see the *Creative Job Search Techniques* document (3rd volume, page 43) — and go to it! The door to the labour market is wide open. If you need advice, do not hesitate to see your manpower counsellor: S/he is there to help you on your way back to work.

